THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) and (b) Despite on unexpected decline in cotton production during 1990-91 cotton season as a result of unfavourable weather conditions and severe pest attacks in certain cotton growing areas of the country, which caused an upward trend in the cotton prices, cotton was all along available to the mills during the season. Government is not aware of any serious crisis faced by textile mills due to fluctuations in the demand and supply position of cotton during the season

**Alleged Case of Cheating in Bank of Maharashtra**

4186. SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether case of alleged cheating involving a sum of Rs. 121.71 crores in the Bank of Maharashtra has come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Bank of Maharashtra has reported that credit facilities extended to a group of accounts with the bank started showing sticky tendencies and in 1985 bank filed a suit for the recovery of a total amount of Rs. 34.42 crores plus interest for subsequent period till realisation. Subsequently, an ex-employee of the bank filed a writ petition in the High Court at Bombay alleging a multi-crore fraud in Bank of Maharashtra allegedly committed by the clients and some senior officials of the bank. Bombay High Court has directed the CBI to conduct investigation. CBI has since registered two cases and has taken up the matter for investigation.

**Shortage of Currency Notes**

4187. SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortage of currency notes of various denominations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) Details regarding percentage of supply of fresh notes to RBI vis-a-vis their indent, in terms of volume and value, for the last three years are as under:

| Year | % of supply to Indent | |
|---|---|---|
| | Volumewise | Valuewise |
| 1988-89 | 42 | 38 |
| 1989-90 | 51 | 29 |
| 1990-91 | 50 | 31 |

The reason for the shortage is the increasing demand of RBI for fresh

notes and the limited capacity of the existing units to meet this demand.

(c) To bridge the gap between the demand and supply of currency/bank notes, following steps have been taken :—

(1) The existing two note printing presses at Dewas and Nasik have been put on two shifts working.

(2) The Government have decided to set up two new Note Printing Presses—one at Salboni (West Bengal) and the other at Mysore (Karnataka).

(3) A decision has been taken to coinise Re. 1/-, Rs. 2/-, and Rs. 5/- denomination notes in a phased manner so as to utilise the capacity so released for printing of higher denomination notes.

**Export of Wheat**

4188. SHRI RABI RAY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the official trading agencies are facing difficulties in finding buyers export wheat to other countries ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation ; and

(d) the target set for export of wheat during the current year and the extent to which it has been achieved so far ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The questions do not arise.

(d) As against the target of 10 Lakh MTS for export of wheat for the current year STC/MMTC have already exported 2.98 lakh MTS and have export orders in hand for another 3.65 lakh MTS.

**Working Group Under Indo-Italian Joint Business Council**

4189. SHRIMATI MAHENDRA KUMARI :
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR KANODIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a working group under the aegis of the Indo-Italian Joint Business Council (JBC) is proposed to be set up to facilitate a large number of joint ventures and licensing agreements between the two countries ;

(b) if so, the broad features thereof and the time by which the working group will be set up ; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue and the areas of exports to Italy ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c) In the 6th Indo-Italian Joint Business Council (JBC) meeting held in Milan, Italy on 18th of June, 1991, it was decided that a working group would be set up mainly with the objective of facilitating Italian joint ventures in India. The working group has since been set up and will strive towards expansion in economic cooperation between the two countries.